

Directorate of Evaluation and Standardization (DES)

What is it?

DES, at the U.S. Army Aviation Center of Excellence, is the U.S. Army Aviation Center of Excellence commanding general's proponent for standardization in the Aviation Branch.

What has Army Aviation done?

In the past, we maintained standardization primarily by giving aviator and non-rated crewmember evaluations at the flight line at Fort Rucker and in aviation units throughout the Army in conjunction with Aviation Resource Management Survey (ARMS) team visits. Today, as Combat Aviation Brigades (CABs) must deal with the demands of short dwell times, DES's scope and responsibilities have expanded. DES is using an Aviation Enterprise approach to integrate the skills of Subject Matter Experts (SMEs) from various schools and commands to improve the combat readiness of our formations. By forming Mobile Training Teams (MTT) and Mobile Assistance Teams (MAT) led by DES and augmented by other organizations and training centers, DES is effectively increasing our training capability for resetting, deploying and mobilizing our aviation units while maintaining standardization in our force.

What continued efforts does Army Aviation have planned for the future?

DES's first priority is to visit units preparing to deploy. The typical visit is conducted by a team made up of Standardization Instructor Pilots (SPs), Maintenance Examiners (MEs), and Standardization Instructors (SIs) for each aircraft. DES also coordinates for other SMEs, when needed, at the request of the unit such as Air Traffic Services, TACOPS, Safety, etc. During these visits, the primary focus is on the unit's Aircrew Training Program (ATP). However, due to the high OPTEMPO of our CABs, DES also uses training as a means to maintain standardization across the aviation force. For example, DES and Eastern Army National Guard Aviation Training Site (EAATS) SPs and SIs are key members of the CH-47F New Equipment Training Team (NETT). DES and 21st Cavalry Brigade MAT SPs and MEs conducted Readiness Level (RL) progression assistance for various units. DES SPs, along with IPs from 110th Aviation Brigade and the Army National Guard (ARNG) conducted a UH-60M Aircraft Qualification Course MTT at Fort Riley in support of 1st Infantry Division CAB, and DES SIs, along with SIs from 110th Aviation Brigade, conducted an Air Crewmember Standardization Instructor Course MTT for the 4th and 101st CABs, and have plans to continue this training with other CABs in FY10.

DES's second priority is to visit units deployed in theater. DES conducts these visits to help units fight complacency, ensure that DES SMEs are current on the latest Tactics, Techniques, and Procedures (TTPs) in theater, and to bring those TTPs, Observations, Insights, and Lessons (OIL) back to future deploying units and our training institution. DES SMEs conduct these visits by integrating into the unit's tactical operations and flying combat missions with their aviators. There is no better way to assess a unit than to operate with them on a daily basis. As with the pre-deployment visits, DES does not conduct these visits alone. In the past, DES has included SMEs from 110th Aviation, other directorates on Fort Rucker, the ARNG Aviation Training Sites, as well as the Combat Training Centers. In FY09, DES visited six deployed CABs in OIF and OEF.

and has plans to visit five deployed CABs in FY10.

DES' third priority is to provide assistance to units returning from deployment. DES, in concert with the U.S. Army Forces Command (FORSCOM) ARMS team, is using these visits as "find it" visits to identify problem areas early in the Army Force Generation (ARFORGEN) cycle to allow time to develop plans to assist units with the challenges of reset and reintegration.

Why is this important to the Army and Army Aviation?

The high flying hour OPTEMPO in theater can sometimes be a recipe for complacency as aviators conduct the same missions day in and day out. DES visits to theater help units combat this hidden enemy. Additionally, due to the changing nature of the battlefield we cannot rely on legacy systems to ensure dissemination of lessons from combat. DES visits to theater give our Aviation Branch a means to gather new TTPs and OIL and ensure that information is quickly given to the next deploying units. Finally, because of the high deployment OPTEMPO of our aviation units and the associated shortened dwell times, it is imperative that we find ways to maximize home station training. Our Aviation Enterprise approach to training and standardization is not only easing the burden on our force but also helping to ensure commanders have the time and trained personnel to conduct collective training prior to deployment.

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